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"The waste of War is not, in its final consequences, so injurious to a state, as the luxuries and corruptions of Peace."—ADDISON.

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TO
WILLIAM ROSCOE, Esq.
LETTER I.

SIR,

Your pamphlet, published within these few days, under the title of "Considerations on the Causes, Objects, and Consequences of the present War, and on the Expediency, or the Danger, of a Peace with France," having fallen into my hands, and appearing to me to express sentiments and opinions, which, if generally adopted, would be greatly mischievous to the country, I think it my duty to make some observations thereon; and, as you have evidently pointed at me, in several parts of the pamphlet, no apology will, I presume, be thought necessary for my addressing myself, in this case, more immediately to you.

When one is told of the publication of a book, or paper, the first question which invariably presents itself is: "What is it about?" Your pamphlet is, to be sure, about war and peace; but, Sir, it is about so many other things as well as war and peace; it enters upon so many different subjects; it contains so many opinions unsupported by reasoning, and so many assertions unsupported by proof, that, to answer you upon every point would require a volume of no moderate size. If I were asked, however, what appears to me to be the object, which you have had in view, in writing and publishing this pamphlet, I should answer, that your main practical object evidently is, to induce the people, especially those of the manufacturing districts, to unite in petitions for peace; and, that your reason for this is, that the war, if continued much longer, will produce financial embarrassments, such as those which led to the overthrow of the monarchy of France, while, on the other hand, there exists, in reality, none of those dangers, which I, amongst other persons, apprehend from a peace, made at this time, and leaving Napoleon in full possession of all the ports and naval arsenals of the continent of Europe.

If you had confined yourself to this one subject, to have answered you would have been plain, straight-forward work; but, un-

der the pretence of showing, that the war has now no rational object, you have gone into a history (a very partial one indeed) of the alledged objects of both the last and the present war, not only at their outset, but also at the several stages of their progress. Not content with this, which has nothing at all to do with the question of peace or war now; you have given us a history of the warlike operations, interspersed with discussions upon points of public law and of political economy; with descriptions of the characters of public men; and with a delineation of the views and motives of political parties. To follow you through all these topics, a sentence of statement demanding, in general, a page of answer, is a task too serious to be thought of; and yet it is, on the other hand, by no means pleasant to suffer any part of your pamphlet, from the sentiments or assertions of which I dissent, to pass off under a silence, which might very reasonably be interpreted into an assent. In this dilemma the course, which appears to me the best to be pursued is this: to reserve, for a future letter, all the digressive topics of your pamphlet, and to examine now into the nature of your statements and opinions, I. With respect to the real original cause of the present war between England and France: II. With respect to the breaking off of the negotiation in 1806, and the views then manifested by Napoleon: III. With respect to the relative situation of the two countries, supposing peace to be now made, leaving all the ports and naval arsenals upon the continent of Europe in the hands, or under the acknowledged controul, of our enemy.

But, first of all, I think it necessary to state to you my reasons for differing very widely indeed from you, as to the tendency of *war in general*, which I perceive you to consider as a pure, unmixed *evil*; and which I consider as being, not only necessary, as it notoriously is, in many cases, in the present state of the world, but also as conducive to the elevation of human nature, to the general happiness of mankind, and, of course, as being a *good*, though, like the greater part of other good things, not unmixed with evil. I am aware of the force of habit, and men are

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in the habit of talking, as you do, of the "horrors of war;" but, I can safely defy you, and all the "philanthropists" now in existence, to prove, that there is, as the consequence of war, any thing a millionth part so horrid as a sight of the interior of those receptacles of disease and of infamy, which are tenanted through the influence of that luxury, which it is the natural tendency of war to abridge, and which can be completely destroyed only by war. That war makes a part of the great scheme of the Creator is abundantly obvious from the universal propensity of his creatures; who, from man himself down to the lowest reptile, discover, the moment they have the powers of motion and perception, that to war makes a part of their nature as much as to love. Look, Sir, at all the natural sports of children, and of young animals of every kind; you will find, that they are only so many sorts of sham-fights. And, if you see, that all God's creatures, in the moments of their greatest enjoyment of life; in those moments when they are free from all pain of mind and of body; when they are full of health and of spirits; when they are perfectly unrestrained, and bidden, as it were, to be as happy as their natures will permit: if you perceive, that, in such a state, they all, without a single exception, discover a propensity for war, will you still say, that war is, in itself, and for its own sake, a thing horrid to contemplate? But, not only is to war, to fight (which is the same thing) a passion natural to all the creation; but, it appears to me to be necessary to the elevation of human nature, and to the happiness of mankind; for, if we suppose a state of the world, from which war is completely and for ever banished, not only is there no longer any use for courage, fortitude, emulation, magnanimity, and many other ennobling qualities, but the very words describing those qualities have no longer any meaning; and, if you strip man of those qualities, what is he, as to this world at least, better than a brute? In giving to the different classes of men, which compose the different nations of the earth, languages so different, that the sounds used by the one are utterly unintelligible to any of the other, the Creator seems to have said, "be you for ever separate;" and, herein is implied the necessity of war; for, without war it is, I think, evident, that to preserve that separation would, unless the nature of man were previously changed, be quite impossible. As to wisdom and science, too, where would be the use of them, if war were banished from the earth? The object of the learned as well as the brave is *distinction*.

The source of distinction is public utility. Public utility, after a very little tracing, is found to rest at the point of public safety; and were it not for the occasional existence of wars, and for the continual possibility of their recurrence, public safety would be a mere sound without sense. In like manner patriotism, loyalty, fidelity under all its different appearances and in all its different degrees, would be obliterated from the catalogue of virtues; and, in short, man would, and must, become a stupid, unimpassioned animal, having no care but that of obtaining his food, and no enjoyment but that of devouring it. I am not, observe, contending, that war, may not, as well as love, be, in some cases, and even in many cases, productive of mischievous effects; but, if I look back into history, or, if I look around me at the present moment, I am compelled to conclude, that its effects are, in general, the reverse. The Greeks and Romans were renowned for their science and their freedom, but not less renowned for those than for their wars; and, which is well worthy of remark, with their martial spirit they lost their love of liberty. The two nations of modern Europe the most famed for science, and, in fact, for freedom, are France and England; and that they have been the most frequently engaged in wars is a fact too notorious to be stated. China offers us an example of a nation living in perpetual peace; and, I believe you will not deny, that, as compared with an European, a Chinese is hardly worthy of the name of man. Nearly the same may be said of all the inhabitants of Asia; whereunto may be added, that the internal government of those unwarlike states and empires is uniformly a pure despotism, the life of every subject being at the mere mercy of the prince, whose very pleasures do not unfrequently consist of what we should call acts of deliberate murder, attended with a refinement in cruelty. You, Sir, make a pathetic appeal to your readers upon the horrors of war. "Were we," say you, "to divest ourselves for a moment of that irritation of mind and inflexibility of heart, which blinds us to all the evils and horrors of war, it would be impossible that we should not acknowledge the calamities it introduces, and feel a most sincere disposition to terminate them. If we turn our eyes to the continent of Europe, what devastation and slaughter has it occasioned, from the confines of Russia to the Southern extremity of Italy. If we look to Egypt or South America, we still find the same cause for sorrow and regret. At no period of society have the

contests of the field been more obstinate, or attended with such a profuse destruction of human life. To the sufferings and the death of the thousands who have fallen, we are to add the misery and the ruin of the tens of thousands that survive them, who have to lament the death of their relatives, their protectors, and their friends: and who, amidst grief and hunger and wretchedness, pour forth their curses on the unsparing sword of war, and on those who call it into action." The principle, upon which you here proceed applies to *all* wars, under whatever circumstances; for, it is because human misery and a destruction of human life have been produced by the war, in which we are now engaged, that, according to your doctrine, we ought to feel a sincere disposition to terminate that war. But, Sir, though war is certainly the immediate cause of the death of many persons, it does not follow, that it is, for that reason alone, to be held in such abhorrence, seeing, that first or last, all those persons must meet with death in some shape or other. As to the wretchedness produced by war, you will find it very difficult, I believe, to show, by the use of dispassionate reason, that there is much want which arises, or which can arise, to any persons remaining at home, from the death of other persons, who are killed in war, it being pretty evident, I think, that of those who are personally engaged in war, very few indeed have been, previous to their being so engaged, the protectors of their kindred and friends. That war does, in no very sensible degree, tend to enhance the dearth of provisions has been amply proved by reasoning as well as by experience; and, though, in some countries, the suddenly withdrawing of a great number of hands from the field may have the effect of causing a scarcity of grain; yet, in this country, no such effect is to be apprehended; because, if a youth be taken, by war, from the plough to day, another, who was just quitting the plough for the side-board, takes his place to-morrow, and that, too, from causes arising out of the war. A thousand men are called from the plough, by the war, to garrison the forts at Portsmouth; a thousand others supply their place, coming, through various channels, from the manufactories, which have been destroyed by the war. The same quantity of food is raised; the same number of persons are fed; but, as the same quantity of manufactures are not exported or made, there is a diminution in the importation and creation of luxuries, and a diminution also in the vices which invariably accompany the enjoyment of those

luxuries. This is one of the general effects of war; and, hence it is, that war, in some cases, operates to the good of nations. Hence it is, that the comparatively barren lands of England are covered with rich crops, while the rich lands of Italy scarcely afforded bread to its enervated inhabitants. The state of England and France, compared with that of Germany and Italy, is a quite sufficient proof, that the general and permanent effect of war is not to destroy, or even to check, the prosperity of nations; while the history of Holland pretty clearly evinces, that the moment a nation ceases to be warlike, that moment she commences her decline, and has already made some degree of progress on her way to subjugation.

But, Sir, notwithstanding what has here been said, I am not, as you seem to insinuate, and as the Morning Chronicle scruples not to assert, so much in love with war as to think it a pity that there ever should be a cessation of hostilities. To speak of war as being, in all possible cases, a good, would be as absurd, as it is to speak of it as an evil, in all possible cases. I wished to enter upon the discussion with you, relative to the expediency of a peace, at this time, with France, without having against me, from the beginning to the end, the weight of that prejudice, which you have so carefully cherished, that war is, in itself a pure, unmixed evil; a thing, in all cases, to be held in abhorrence, and, of course, to be, at all times, gotten rid of as soon as possible, without much, or, perhaps, any, consideration as to the terms. And, if I have been so fortunate as to remove this prejudice from the minds of my readers, I have not much apprehension as to their decision upon the points to be discussed.

I. *With respect to the real original cause of the present war between England and France*, you allow, Sir, that there were certain "impediments" relating to the evacuation of Holland by the French troops, and of the island of Malta by the English; but, that the chief cause of the war, was, the writings and publications of certain "unprincipled" individuals in England, who found an interest in the revival of the war. You complain of the conduct of the French emigrants, in this respect, and then you tell us, that "another, and still more formidable party" [of these enemies to peace] "consisted of the innumerable bands of journalists and hireling writers, who feed upon the credulity and fatten upon the calamities of a nation; men who flourish most in the midst of tumult; to whom the disasters of the country are as valua-

"ble as her triumphs, a destructive battle as a rich harvest, and a new war as a freehold estate. . . . Their reiterated clamours," you tell us, "appeared like the public voice. Scarcely were the preliminaries of the treaty concluded, than" [an odd sort of English, this] "new grounds of war were discovered. . . . By these means the combustibles were prepared for a new explosion." And this, Sir, is, in another part of your pamphlet, what you call "having shown that the present war was instigated by a few interested and unprincipled individuals." This representation of yours, Sir, is not true; and, as you have, from your frequent quoting of them, proved that you have read the several official dispatches, connected with the rupture, in 1803, you must have known, that it was not true. In no one of these papers is there contained any complaint against the English press, previous to the signing of the definitive treaty; it is notorious, that, at the time of signing the definitive treaty, and for several months afterwards, all those hirelings, of whom you speak, were engaged in praising the then first Consul and his government; and, when, in the month of July, 1802, Mr. Otto, made his complaint to Lord Hawkesbury, the only presses he complained of by name were, that of *Peltier*, the *Courier de Londres*, and of *Cobbett*. He did, indeed, add, "and others like them;" but those others it would have been very difficult for him to have pointed out*. As, therefore, Mr. Peltier and the *Courier de Londres*, belong to your class of foreigners, who sighed without ceasing for the return of feudal vassalage (not so degrading, by the bye, as the vassalage of our manufactories), you leave to me, of course, the undivided honour of having instigated the war, and of being an "interested and unprincipled individual," a "hireling who fattens upon the calamities of the nation." But, Sir, again I say, that your representation is not true, and that, as you had evidently read the official papers, you must, at the time when you wrote it, have known it not to be true. This will appear from the whole tenor of the papers, but particularly from General Andreossy's letter to Lord Hawkesbury, of 8. Germinal, year 11, that is to say, in the month of March, 1803, in which letter he says: "A few days after the ratification of peace, one of his Britannic Majesty's ministers declared that the peace establishment must be considerable; and, the distrust excited by this de-

* See Mr. Otto's letter, Register, Vol. III. page 1002.

claration, made in parliament, with as much bitterness as impropriety, furnished a commentary for the exaggeration and alarms which were circulated in despicable pamphlets, and in newspapers as contemptible as those libels. Since that time these writers have found themselves invariably supported in their insolent observations by particular phrases taken from the speeches of leading members of parliament. *These speeches*, scarcely to be exceeded by the news-writers themselves, have, for these eighteen months, tended to encourage insult against other governments, to that degree, that every European must be offended, and every reasonable Englishman must be humiliated, by such unheard-of licentiousness."† In a subsequent part of the same letter Andreossy tells Lord Hawkesbury, that the wish of the First Consul is, that measures should be adopted in both countries to prevent any mention being made of what was passing in the other; and this prevention he wished to be extended to the "official discussions" as well as to the "polemical writings;" that is to say, to the *parliament* as well as to the *press*. Is it true, then, Sir, as you have represented, that the complaint of France was made against wretched "hirelings" only; that it was a few "interested and unprincipled individuals" who blew up the flame of war? Or is your representation false? Here, in the letter of Andreossy, is a complaint made of the language of the ministry, of the opposition in parliament, of pamphleteers and of newspaper editors. Were all these "interested and unprincipled" individuals, who "fattened upon the calamities of the nation?" It is evident, not only from this letter of Andreossy, but from the generally pervading tone of the correspondence, that Buonaparté aimed at silencing, not only the press, but the parliament, as far as related to him and his actions; and that, first or last, nothing short of this would have satisfied him. You, indeed, appear to think, that there would be very little harm in the success of an effort of this kind. "To foreign states," you tell us, "that which a country does, or which it permits to be done by its subjects is the same. With our internal regulations they can have no concern; but, they have a right to expect from us that respect for *their institutions*, which we claim for our own." Well, Sir,

† See the letter of Andreossy, Register Vol. III. p. 1055. The whole of the papers are collected in the volume, and at the place here referred to.

and what our institutions wherein land of many the England pers, wit tive of many the tutions b how man called sla thieves, and over you neve nister in plaint up claim, made; a principled vented s purpose reasonable Buonapar readers t granted, the war; to convin would ha found no we are t reign nat as the oth "respect times hav "instita mitted to why were institution the celeb Why, Sir be permit tion" as time, to parté, by Consul fo was then This mus you, and perceived o'er th of Fran you, we n had been and, there the post- All the w only diffe and, whe despotism now be no

and what is this respect, which we claim for our institutions? Can you cite an instance, wherein complaint has been made by England of a libel upon her institutions? How many thousands of times has the king of England been loaded, in the American papers, with every epithet and name expressive of what is hateful and wicked; how many thousands of times have all our institutions been treated in the same manner; how many thousands of times have we been called slaves, beasts of burden, journeymen thieves, and all this because we did not rise and overturn our institutions. Yet, have you never heard, I believe, Sir, that our minister in America made, at any time, a complaint upon this score. You can find no "claim," of this sort, that we have ever made; and, whether in a manner "unprincipled," or not, you have evidently invented such a claim, on our part, for the purpose of defending, or of giving the air of reasonableness and fairness to, the claim of Buonaparté, which claim, you leave your readers to conclude, ought to have been granted, in order to prevent the renewal of the war; but, I think, it will not be difficult to convince those readers, that the man who would have granted this claim, would have found no claim too great to be granted. If we are to "respect the institutions" of foreign nations, we are to respect one as well as the other; and, why should we not, then, "respect" the Inquisition in Spain? Volumes have been written by us against that "institution;" and, if we ought to be permitted to write freely upon that subject, why were we to hold our tongues as to the institutions of Buonaparté, one of which was the celebrated "Cayenne Diligence?" Why, Sir, pray tell us why, we ought not to be permitted to speak of the latter "institution" as well as of the former? About the time, to which we are referring, Buonaparté, by a sham election, made himself Consul for Life, in direct violation of what was then called "the constitution of France." This must have been a severe mortification to you, and others, whose wisdom had, in 1790, perceived the day-star of liberty advancing o'er the vine-cover'd hills and gay regions of France;" and, out of compassion for you, we might have disguised the fact, if that had been possible; but it was impossible, and, therefore, we did laugh most heartily at the post-like senate and legislative corps. All the world laughed as well as we, "the only difference was, we dared laugh out;" and, when we were told, that this military despotism, the establishment of which could now be no longer disguised, had been caused

by the Duke of Brunswick's proclamation, issued in 1793; when we were told, as you now tell us, that it was from indignation at the attempts to conquer and enslave her, that France became warlike and became herself a conqueror; and that, having, through the courage and exertions inspired by a love of liberty, got rid of, or subdued, all her enemies, she, from the *same cause*, became herself the slave of a single military despot, who kept a Cayenne Diligence continually upon the trot; when we were gravely told this, we laughed still more; and, it was this that you would have prevented by the cutting of our ears off, or the splitting of our noses. If your doctrine be adopted, how shall we dare to write at all respecting foreign nations? Who will dare to say, that the government of France, or Spain, or Russia, or Turkey, is not as good as the government of England? Who will dare to describe the character of foreign princes or ministers? Who will dare to write history? Who will dare to write a book of travels? Who will dare, upon subjects connected with foreign princes, or states, to move his pen, or to open his lips? "In war time we may abuse them as much as we please." But, not to dwell upon the baseness of this, upon the total want of principle which it developes, when the war ceases, the newly-invented public law of libel begins again to operate; so that the identical paper or book, which was a lawful publication but yesterday, may, to-day, if a copy of it be sold (every sale being a fresh publication), subject both the author and the publisher to the loss of their ears and to confinement in jail at the discretion of the judge. After broaching a doctrine like this, it is with singular propriety, that you observe, in the true attorney-general-like style, that "to inroach upon the freedom of the press, will never be the act of any *real friend to the interests of mankind*; but, "to restrain its *licentiousness* is not to encroach upon, but to preserve that freedom." These are almost the very words of Mr. Blackstone, who, soon after he had put them into print, became a judge. This very form of words was used in the case of Mr. Heriot, who was prosecuted by that famous Whig, and "friend to the interests of mankind," Lord St. Vincent, for having published an alledged falsehood relative to his conduct, as Lord of the Admiralty; and, who, in order, I suppose, to prove to all the world as clear as daylight, that the thing asserted by him was false, was brought to trial by a form of process which prevented him from producing any evidence to prove that it was true. Nevertheless, Mr. Heriot

was sent to jail for a good six months, in order to "restrain the licentiousness of the press, and thereby to preserve its freedom." I wonder, Sir, that you, who have made some noise with your talk about liberty, do not feel a little bashful at repeating, as your own, these words of Mr. Blackstone; that you are not ashamed to applaud a form of prosecution, which prohibits the person prosecuted from pleading, in his defence, the truth of the words, to have uttered which is imputed to him as a crime. I wonder you are not ashamed of this; you, who so inordinately rejoiced at the French revolution, as the dawn of liberty upon the continent of Europe; you, who have always belonged to that party, whose claim to public favour was founded solely upon their attachment to the cause of freedom, and whose constant cry, *until they were in office*, was "the liberty of the press." But, this inconsistency does really appear to me, to have arisen, in you, at least, out of an attachment to France generally, and to her ruler in particular. For his sake it is, that you would extend the operation of the law of libel to publications relating to foreign princes and states; for, though you speak of "foreign states," in the plural number, it is quite evident, that your eye is fixed on France alone; and, however angry it may make you, I cannot help expressing my opinion, that the care which you have taken to disguise the fact, that the *speeches in parliament* were complained of by Buonaparté not less than the pamphlets and newspapers, and that the infinite pains you have bestowed in order to produce a belief, that the war had no other efficient cause than the publications of "a few interested and unprincipled individuals," ought to be considered as a strong presumptive proof of your entertaining an unnatural partiality for the enemy, whose cause you have pleaded in the true spirit of a professed advocate.—But, Sir, it is not true, that the publications in England, or that the speeches in parliament, were the original cause of the present war. Mr. Andreossy says, when speaking of the publications in the *Moniteur* (which, observe, were acknowledgedly the act of the government of France,) "they are of an order too secondary to be capable of influencing such a decision" [that of war]. "Are we, then, to return to the age of tournaments? Motives of this nature might have authorized, four centuries ago, the combat of thirties; but, they cannot, in this age, be a reason for war between the two countries." He says, in another part of his letter, after enu-

merating all the complaints about the language of the parliament and the press, that the first Consul "did not, on that account, entertain a doubt of the continuance of peace." Now, Sir, either Mr. Andreossy, who was charged to express to us the sentiments of the first Consul, must have been wrong, must, in fact, have said what was false; or you must now be wrong. One or the other you must acknowledge, unless, which is not very improbable, you should choose to say, that Buonaparté, upon whose sincerity, on all other occasions, you have an unbounded reliance, did, in this one little instance, play the hypocrite.—I, for my part, scruple not to say, that the attempts of Buonaparté to restrain the liberty of speech and of the press would have been, if not speedily atoned for, a sufficient ground of war; but, our poor tame ministers of that day were very far indeed from demanding satisfaction for so gross an affront upon the country. Nay, they not only suffered him to make his attempts, but flattered him with success, and actually began, in the person of Mr. Peltier, to offer up sacrifices to his arrogance. You, Sir, seem to regret, that they were not more expeditious, and that the war came to rob Buonaparté of a victim. But, without a new law for the purpose, they could not proceed quicker; and, it is hardly to be supposed, that he had not some friend in this country to inform Mr. Andreossy, that, as matters stood just then, unfurnished as we were with a Cayenne Diligence, the good Addington ministry were doing all that lay in their power to accommodate things to his liking. In short, the press was fast falling under the clutches of Buonaparté, and, though you seem to have forgotten it, the members of parliament had received a hint, "that, if such reproachful language, with respect to the head of the French government, were indulged in, it would be impossible to maintain the relationships of peace and amity." So that, if any thing short of the Cayenne Diligence would have satisfied him, he was in a fair way of being perfectly satisfied.—It was not the press, then, that was the cause of the war. There were several other causes, though you, Sir, have thought proper, to keep them wholly out of sight. You speak of the "impediments" to the evacuation of Holland and of Malta, as if those impediments were the whole that had occurred, as matter of difference, between the peace of Amiens and the breaking out of the war. Is it possible, that you can have overlooked the famous proceeding, called "the German Indemnities," in which

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France assumed to herself the right of dividing and parcelling out the territory and the revenues of the several states of Germany? Is it, indeed, a fact, that you have forgotten, that one of her first acts in peace was to make Savoy, which was to remain independent of France, a department of France? Can you, such an ardent admirer of liberty, have forgotten, that another act of peace, on the part of Buonaparté, was to send an army to invade Switzerland, to place one of his own creatures at the head of the government there, and to make that country, as to all practical purposes, another department of France? Sebastiani's mission and report you have noticed; but, you have done it, merely for the purpose of shewing, that we, too, could complain of foul language, when directed against ourselves, totally omitting, however, to draw the distinction between publications, in pamphlets and news-papers, by unauthorised individuals, and a report made by an accredited agent of the government, made to the government by that agent, and published by that government, under its own name, having, from these circumstances, just the same character and weight as if it had been a note, delivered by the French Ambassador to Lord Hawkesbury. This you have omitted to do; and, you have, too, whether from want of principle, or not, I shall leave the reader to judge, omitted to state, that the publication which gave most offence to Buonaparté, was that of Sir Robert Wilson, whom, though you may, perhaps, include him amongst those "hirelings, who fatten upon the calamities of the nation," you have not, amidst all your avowed contempt for unmanliness, ventured to name, though there was, it appears to me, much more necessity for naming him, than for naming Mr. Peltier. But, it was not on account of the abusive language of Sebastiani's report, that it was made, by us, a subject of complaint. That report disclosed, in the usual way of the French, the views which they meant to act upon, with respect to Egypt. It discovered the intentions of Buonaparté with regard to those territories of the Turks; and, added to the other considerations of the time, was one principal cause of the renewal of the war. You appear, Sir, to have quite forgotten, too, the dispute relative to Mr. Talleyrand's "*commercial commissaries*," coming from a country, with which we had no commercial connection, and furnished with maps, charts, and mathematical instruments, instead of laws of shipping and tables of custom-house duties. You forget, that, in Mr.

Talleyrand's instructions to these curious envoys, one was to ascertain the soundings of the port in which they were stationed and the bearings of the land from the place of entrance; that another was, to come at the extent of the population near the coast; another, to take an account of the naval and military force, and to sound the disposition of the people. You forget, that several of these agents were destined for the ports of Ireland, where one of them, if I am not in mistake, had actually arrived, and had begun his "*commercial*" inquiries, when the whole of them were ordered to decamp. All these things you have forgotten: no, you have not forgotten any one of them; for you have shewn us, that you have recently read the dispatches, and, having read them, it is impossible, that you should not have been reminded of all the causes of war, which I have here enumerated. These causes co-operated in producing the war. There was nothing so near the hearts of the then ministers as the preservation of peace, upon almost any terms. If the silencing of the small part of the press (for it was a mere trifle) which held a warlike language, had been all that was necessary, they would very soon have accomplished that, and would have been applauded for the act by three fourths of the parliament, by ninety nine hundredths of the press, and by a like proportion of the people, in their then disposition to sink quietly beneath the domineering spirit of France. But, the ministers, though willing to go almost any length in the way of concession and humiliation, saw that all concession and humiliation would finally fail; and, day after day admonished them, that time was only adding to the weight of their responsibility. They saw Buonaparté making bolder strides of conquest in peace than he had made in war; they could look in no direction without seeing marks of his restless ambition; and, they justly dreaded, that, taking advantage of some favourable moment, he would, in the midst of peace, accomplish, or, at least, attempt, some act of open hostility against England or Ireland. It was in this state of mind, that they resolved upon war; and though Malta stood in the fore-ground, there was a combination of causes, which really produced the event; a combination not very easy to be described, and, therefore, Mr. Addington, cutting the matter short, emphatically answered those who inquired into the causes of the war: "*We are at war, because we cannot be at peace.*" And yet, Sir, you, by the means of garbled statements and forced constructions, taking advantage of the

want of that information which must generally prevail upon such subjects, would fain make the people believe, that Buonaparté was sincerely disposed to preserve the peace, and to desist from all encroachments; and that the sole cause of the war, in which we are now engaged, arose not from any opinion entertained by our ministers that it was necessary to our safety, but merely from the irritation produced by the "unjust and offensive aspersions against the ruler of France," written and published by "venal demagogues," by "mercenary scribblers," by "a few interested and unprincipled individuals, who fatten upon the calamities of the nation;" than which attempt to impose upon the unwary and to excite discontent in the distressed, I am inclined to believe that few readers will be able to form an idea of any thing more completely unprincipled, especially when they come hereafter to compare your present exertions with that profound silence, which, while in parliament, you observed, upon the subject of the negotiation of 1806.

II. Before I speak of the *Negotiation of 1806 and of the views then manifested by Napoleon*, I cannot help making a remark or two upon the manner, in which you introduce that part of your subject, reserving, however, the pretty story about Mr. Fox and the assassin for a letter of lighter matter. "The reins of government," upon the death of Mr. Pitt, you say, "fell from the hands of his panic-stricken colleagues in office. A change in the administration of the country took place, and the union of Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox with that of their friends, encouraged the hope, not only of a speedy termination of hostilities, but of that steady and gradual amelioration in our domestic concerns, which, without alarming the fears of the weak, might satisfy the reasonable expectations of the country." Now, Sir, it appears to me, that if your wisdom had, upon this occasion, been equal to your zeal, you would not have said a word about the reins falling from the hands of the panic-stricken colleagues of Mr. Pitt; seeing that those very men have, and that, too, in a moment of the war still more calamitous than that in which they quitted office, regressed the reins of government, and, hoisting the Duke of Portland to the head of the ministry, have not only defeated their political opponents, but have adopted measures, which have made the enemy, though now become the conqueror of all the continent of Europe, lower his tone with respect to England.—You tell us, Sir, that the change

which took place, at the time referred to; that the union of Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox with that of their friends, encouraged the hope of a speedy termination of hostilities; but, you do not give us any reason, or produce any indication of public feeling, upon which this assertion is founded. Difficult indeed would it be for you to do either. The new ministry was composed of Mr. Fox and three others, who had approved of the peace of Amiens, besides Mr. Addington and Lord Ellenborough, who were in office when that peace was made; but, in this same ministry were Lord Grenville, who was at the head of the whole, Mr. Windham who was at the head of the war department, and, in one post, or another, every lord and every commoner, with, I believe, the sole exception of Lord Folkestone, who had voted against the peace of Amiens, your delightful peace of Amiens, the non-preservation of which you so pathetically lament. Nay, sir, in this ministry were, without exception, all those noblemen and gentlemen, whose speeches in parliament had given so much offence to Buonaparté, previous to the commencement of the war; and who, moreover, had, from time to time, taken special care to convince the nation, that their opinion of his character and views had undergone no material change. Pray tell us, then, sir, how their elevation to power (of which, observe, they were at the very head) could, in any sane mind, encourage the hope of a speedy termination of hostilities." Yet, when you come afterwards to speak of the termination of the war between France and Russia, and of the second change in the ministry, which had taken place in the interim; you again advert to this disposition in the late ministry, and that, too, for purposes so evidently of a factious nature as not to leave them the possibility of their being misunderstood. "In the mean time," say you, "a change had taken place in the British ministry, founded on one of the most extraordinary popular delusions ever practised on the credulity of a nation. As the new ministers consisted chiefly of those, who had supported, with undeviating pertinacity, the war system, it was not to be expected, that any change of measures, favourable to a pacification, was likely to take place." Then you proceed to speak of the offer of Russian mediation, and to ascribe its rejection to this pertinacious love of war, in the present ministers. This is a point of great importance with you; it is the foundation work of the false notions, which your pamphlet is calculated to inculcate; and,

Therefore persons, obviously su Lord Gre rary, Mr for the w first lord late presi late secre ment. I all of wh Amiens; contende under ci time wh safe; al merely a of war peace. and you who w Amiens of them of that them, n tern pos who eit I do no conduc was in land; ing, th sious offer of in fact, I must inventi without called eviden geance Liverp so per war, count and the co smalle now but, prese next, Botle S ed to befor more

Therefore, it is necessary to remove it. The persons, now alive, who had most pertinaciously supported the “war system,” were Lord Grenville, late first lord of the treasury, Mr. Windham, late secretary of state for the war department, Mr. Grenville, late first lord of the admiralty, Lord Fitzwilliam, late president of the council, Lord Spencer, late secretary of state for the home department. Here were five cabinet ministers, all of whom had voted against the peace of Amiens; all of whom had undeviatingly contended, that no peace with Buonaparte, under circumstances, such as existed at the time when that treaty was made, could be safe; all of whom had contended, that, merely as a trial against time, the chances of war were better than the chances of peace. Now, look at the present cabinet, and you will find, sir, that there are some who were in office when the peace of Amiens was made; that almost the whole of them, not then in office, spoke in favour of that peace; and that there is not amongst them, nor, I believe, in any of the subaltern post of the ministry, one single man, who either spoke or voted against that peace. I do not say this in commendation of their conduct; for, my opinion is, that that peace was injurious as well as disgraceful to England; but, I say it for the purpose of showing, that the cause, to which you are desirous of attributing the rejection of the offer of Russian mediation has no foundation in fact, and is a pure invention of your own. I must say, too, that I look upon it as an invention proceeding from a motive, which, without the least exaggeration, may be called “unprincipled;” for, that motive evidently is to endeavour to obtain vengeance on the ministers for your defeat at Liverpool, by representing them as being so pertinaciously attached to a system of war, that, *while they remain in office*, the country, whatever its sufferings may be, and however useless and hopeless may be the continuation of the contest, has not the smallest chance of a restoration of peace.

—Having cleared up this point, I should now proceed to the Negotiation of 1806; but, not having room to conclude it in the present sheet, I shall postpone it to my next, remaining, in the mean while,

Your, &c.

Botley, 11th Feb. 1808. WM. COBBETT.

“*PERISH COMMERCE.*”

SIR,—Such is the motto you have adopted to several of your late speculations, but before I concur in the sentiment, I require more explanation. If I understand Mr.

Spence, he does by no means maintain that foreign commerce is injurious, or that it should be either at once, or gradually given up. He says only that the loss of it would not be so hurtful as is generally imagined, which under our present circumstances is consoling, and I think he has in a great measure proved it. But if I understand you, Mr. Cobbett, you are for applying the axe to the root completely, and without ceremony. You maintain that natural wealth cannot arise from foreign commerce. Now let us take the instance of Holland. You will not surely deny that Holland *was* a rich country. Though her commerce is almost annihilated she is still a rich country. Her riches were not at the former period, much more than now, adventitious or floating. They were fixed, permanent, realised. How were these riches acquired but by foreign commerce? Her territory, though fertile and cultivated to the uttermost, was small and never could afford subsistence to half of the inhabitants. Her riches could not therefore arise from agriculture or her own produce, or the internal consumption either of it or her manufactures.—I conceive only one way of surmounting this example and still adhering to your doctrines as applied to this country. It may be said that the Dutch were merely *Carriers*. The gain of the Carriers though small is steady and certain. And are not we also Carriers, though not in the same proportion as the Dutch, regarding the extent of our commerce and theirs, because we have a great country to supply, and a luxurious people, while they were a small country and an economical frugal people. When we send bullion and our manufactured goods to the East-Indies, and bring back teas and other luxuries, or articles we might do without, are all these consumed by ourselves? Do we not send a surplus to other countries, and from thence derive a profit which is an addition to the natural wealth? Instancing the trade to the last, the most unprofitable commerce we follow, is giving you every advantage.—Till I am better instructed, I shall hold my opinion that while the balance of foreign commerce is in our favour, however small that balance may be—if the trade of export and import were precisely at par—it is highly advantageous for the country to preserve it, were it merely because it supports a multitude of industrious people. I don't speak of the merchants or the capitalists, but the actual manufacturers. I consider it a mere fallacy or sophistry, to say these are really paid from the produce of our own soil. Were it so, the country would long ago have felt

the burden of excessive population. But these manufacturers purchase the produce from the wages which commercial men are able from the surplus gain to afford. They are in truth maintained in a great measure by foreigners, and thus commerce and agriculture mutually tend to the support and encouragement of one another.—I.

LEGISLATIVE REGULATIONS.

SIR,—There are two subjects affecting the politics of this country, which, though they have by no means escaped your notice, have not been immediately placed in a point of view as calling for legislative interference; though I confess, that to my humble apprehension, they seem to demand the early consideration of parliament. The first of these subjects relates to the liberty, which by our laws are given to subjects of this country, of becoming the proprietors of funded or landed property under the dominion of a foreign power. The second regards the propriety of a naval or military commander being directly, or indirectly, interested in the traffic of any merchandize, or other commercial speculation. No nation has ever yet depended for its support on the voluntary allegiance of its citizens. Laws have always been enacted to enforce allegiance, and to punish those who have withheld it: and though that nation must be weak indeed, whose subjects are kept in a state of obedience purely by means of force, and its existence must continue extremely precarious, yet have such compulsory laws, even in republics, been ever held essential; not as implying that the affections of the people were to be doubted, but to correct that aberration from duty, which no state can be entirely free from, and to prevent the mischievous effects which the example of one disaffected citizen might produce, by contaminating the minds of others: such being the frailty of human nature, that even error has at all periods found its votaries. If then allegiance be so essential to the welfare and existence of a state in times of tranquillity, how much more important does it become in those unfortunate periods, when the distracted ambition of one nation, or the petulant arrogance of another, threatens her with near approaching hostility. It is then that allegiance, which before was scarcely more than a name, is called upon to assume a palpable existence. It is then that a state imperiously calls for her Nestors and her Ulysseses; for the most vigorous and able counsels of her subjects. It is then that she expects that those who are delegated with the great and important trust of de-

fending their country, should be animated with the zeal of a Nelson, and feel no satisfaction greater than that of "shaking-off this mortal coil," in so dear and honorable a cause. But, sir, that these purposes should be answered, it is essential that the INDIVIDUAL should not conflict with the PUBLIC interest. Self-love, however quaintly affected to be despised by some, is the great masterspring of the human machine, and statesmen and philosophers must invariably regard its operations, both in their speculations and practice. To effect therefore the advantages which result from true allegiance, the subject in all his interests must be connected with his country; he must have all his nearest and dearest objects insulated within her territories: by this means the subject and the state are identified in point of benefit, and to defend and protect the latter is to preserve the treasures of the former. But when the subject is unwisely permitted to become a fundholder or land proprietor in a foreign territory, his interest is immediately divided, and the Hercules, which but for this would have been of inestimable benefit to his native state, becomes a mere useless Colossus, striding the vast ocean, with one foot on either territory, but of utility to neither. But what if the interest of the subject should preponderate against his native country? We may be told that a hero would offer up all private interest at the shrine of patriotism; but let it be remembered that all men are not heroes. However we may boast of integrity and inflexible justice, we should reflect, that only one Lucius Junius Brutus has been met with in thirteen centuries; and that the conduct of this man (a chief magistrate!) in punishing his two sons for treason against the state, has been the subject of unceasing panegyric by all historians, from that period to the present: a sufficient example to prove how few are the instances in which public duty triumphs over private feeling. It is not, however, during the immediate period of a war that this distraction of interests in the subject is to be regarded; the most material consideration, is the conduct of such a man pending a negotiation, to preclude the necessity of a war. What concessions, were such an one minister, is it to be supposed that he would not make, to prevent that hostility, which would deprive him of a property upon which the splendour of his family might possibly depend! And with what advantage would that enemy treat with us, in whose power should be placed a considerable mass of the property of our subjects. Indeed view the subject as dispassionately,

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and with as little prejudice as you please, it is surrounded on all sides with the most glaring disadvantages: whether we are at present laboring under any inconveniences arising from any of the circumstances before noticed, I shall not anticipate; sufficiently clear it is, that the subjects of any power possessing property in a foreign state, must to such power prove extremely pernicious in its consequences; and I therefore trust that some early legislative provision, will put an end to so baneful a practice. With respect to the second of the subjects mentioned by me, regarding naval and military commanders, either directly or indirectly engaging in commercial speculations, I shall not enter into any reasoning to shew the impolicy of permitting such a species of traffic, as the observations I have already made on the former subject, are equally applicable to the present. Whether the articles of war, or any regulations affecting our army or navy, prohibit any officer naval or military from becoming a merchant I know not; but if there be any such prohibition, it certainly does not provide against the embarking a sum of money, or being interested in the profits of any mercantile adventure, or such a prohibition is indeed but little attended to, and should be better expressed. That a naval or military commander should be influenced with no interest that may induce even a momentary deviation from the strict performance of those services which his country justly expects from him, is so self evident, that I shall not occupy more of your time, Mr. Cobbett, than to express my earnest wishes, that a regulation to this effect, may also engage the early attention of the ensuing parliament.—W. F. S.—*Lincoln's Inn, Jan. 18th, 1808.*

FUNDING SYSTEM.

MR. COBBETT,—I take the liberty of suggesting a few hints on the subject of our Public Debt and Sinking Fund, in consequence of the letter of C. S. which appeared in your last Register.—I have neither time nor ability to enter into a minute discussion of the various opinions, which have at different times appeared in your Register on this most interesting and important subject; but as I have thought your ideas to have been sometimes erroneous, I shall content myself with a few observations, in hopes that you, who are more competent to the task, will pursue the enquiry, and either acknowledge the propriety of my opinions, or endeavour to convince me that I am wrong. Your correspondent quotes from the speech

of Lord H. Petty, a passage to shew that it was the opinion of Mr. Pitt, as well as himself, that great mischief might arise from the extinguishing at once a very large portion of the national debt.—He says, that by returning all their capital to the holders of stock, capital itself would cease to be of value and the nation might be nearly ruined.—In order to prove the fallacy of this reasoning, I shall first state that I consider the whole of the national debt to be an ideal property, entirely depending on the regular payment of an annual interest, raised by taxes from the people. The continual addition to the amount of the debt must lower the value of money by increasing the sum to be raised upon the people out of the produce of their industry.—Does not this depreciation lessen the real burthen of the debt, in proportion as a pound of the interest will buy less corn than it used to do? This is some consolation to me in comparing the present debt with that of former times, the real pressure there may have been nearly equal to what we experience now.—Does not that part of the produce of the taxes which is received by the commissioners for the reduction of the national debt, as the interest of the stock redeemed, keep up the price of the stocks when brought into the market for the purchase of other stock, by providing a constant supply for those, who, from any cause, want to convert their fixed capital into money? In other words, does it not keep down the interest of money by making 3 per cent. worth more than it otherwise would be?—If the operation of the Sinking Fund should continue so long as to bring into the market more money as interest of the stock redeemed, than would buy the new stock wanted to be created for the exigencies of government, and what should be brought for sale by individuals, I conceive it might so raise the price of stocks, or in other words lower the rate of interest as to make the annual revenue from every kind of property proportionably less, as was the case when consols were above 90.—In this view I conceive the Sinking Fund an assistance to the commercial world, which always finds money scarce when interest is high. Suppose no part of the National Debt is wiped out, or suppose no tax producing part of the interest of the debt is repealed, but an addition is on the contrary annually made for the year's services, will not the real value of money, that is, its relative value to corn, continue to be depreciated, so as to raise the actual price of every property measured by the circulating medium, which I presume to continue to be Bank of

England notes, whilst the proportion of revenue from such property is lessened, till it shall make corn nominally so much higher here than in other countries, and raise the exchange so much against England as to make bullion bear a higher value in that state than as coin? This would occasion two prices of every commodity, a money price and a paper price, or in other words cause the measure of property to be Bank of England notes compared with their value in the corn market, and give to those notes a price of so much silver per pound sterling, instead of saying as we now do, gold and silver are worth so many pound notes per ounce or larger weight. I conceive this has been hitherto prevented since the restriction on the bank and depreciation in the value of money, by an actual depression in the general market of the world for bullion, by the increased quantity furnished from America, and the lessened demand for it in France, &c. since the revolution, when the church plate has been melted down to aid the supply from America in the work of depression.—When the relative proportion of the price of bullion to paper money shall be found to alter, will not this be corrected by cancelling a proportion of the debt, that is by taking off a certain quantity of taxes? For as increasing the taxes or the sum to be paid out of the produce of the estates of the country raises the nominal price of corn, and thus lowers the value of a pound note; I conceive the price of corn would be reduced, or the value of a pound note be raised by the contrary operation of lessening the taxes. I call it the nominal price of corn, presuming with Dr. Smith, that the real price as measured by labour is always nearly the same. If these ideas be correct, may not the alteration in the price of bank notes as measured by bullion, become the criterion to judge how soon a part of the debt should be extinguished?—As the commissioners only buy stock voluntarily offered for sale, it is impossible they can throw more capital into the hands of the public than shall be actually wanted, and as extinguishing the debt is only annihilating taxes, how can it have the effect to depreciate the value of circulating capital according to Lord H. Petty's statement. He appears to confound the present purchases of the commissioners with the ultimate extinction of the debt, which I have endeavoured to shew must be independent of each other.—The purchases by the commissioners must raise the price of stock, that is lessen the interest or revenue from capital—but the extinction of the debt will increase the value in corn, or real value

of the interest or money so derived from capital.—I remain, &c. LASEY.

TITHES.

SIR,—As very great and important business, will in all probability, be agitated and discussed at the ensuing meeting of parliament; there is none of a domestic nature of equal weight and importance than the subject of tithes, as the abolition of which is fervently and seriously prayed for by thousands of his Majesty's faithful and loyal subjects, both clergy and laity; and although I much admire, and approve of your remarks and observations upon most subjects upon which you write, yet I am truly astonished at your objections for a commutation, in lieu of this most abominable and detestable of all taxes and imposts, this curse upon industry and agricultural improvements, which nothing can ameliorate but a total abolition. It is far from my wish that the clergy should sustain one farthing loss by any innovation or change in the tithing system, my most ardent wish is to make the church truly respectable, and I am confident every landholder and occupier, will readily and cheerfully pay more by commutation than they do at present.—When we consider the manifold disputes, the enmity and hatred which is established and riveted, between the tithe owner and farmer, not only for their lives, but frequently descend to generations; when we see our churches deserted, and religion fast declining; when we see in our courts of justice thousands of pounds expended in law, arising oftentimes from the most frivolous causes, must surely be a conviction how grievous and detestable the present tithing system must be to every one. To illustrate that disputes at law frequently arise from frivolous causes, I beg leave to state the case of a very industrious, honest, worthy friend of mine, residing in the western part of this country. The great bashaw Tythe-Monger, who is a layman, has been in the practice of taking his tithes in kind, and from an election pique he harboured against my friend, ordered his men whom he sent to collect his tithes, to treat him with every kind of insult and indignity; accordingly, when they first came to collect their tithes, they let their trace horses loose in a fine field of wheat, to eat and trample my friend's corn, while they loaded their carts; at another time they left open a gate which they passed through, and let a number of cattle into another field which was not cut, and did considerable damage; at another time broke open a gate, and went into another corn field, and carried away what they

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thought proper before the tithe was set out, and when my friend went to remonstrate, and pray they would discontinue to harrass and injure him in such manner, he received no other apology than the most heinous curses and scurrilous abuse, which was too much for John Bull to take, and he gave one of the fellows who was the most abusive and impertinent a box under the ear; and, I dare say, Mr. Cobbett, you and every reader of your Register, will say, what a pity but he had given him a good threshing. And for this great assault the great tithe-monger has actually instituted a suit against him, which is now pending in a court of law. To enumerate how very grievous and obnoxious the present tithe system is, would fill a volume of your Register. Consider, Sir, how many millions of acres of waste land would be brought into cultivation, if a commutation of tithes should fortunately take place, and how many of hands would be employed in such cultivation, which now is thrown out of employment by the rigorous decrees of Buonaparté. I am persuaded, but few landholders will begin this great national improvement, without an alteration takes place in tithes, for no sooner has the farmer brought his land into an excellent state of culture, at an immense expence, but in comes the tithe man immediately for the tenth of its produce.—I beg to state the case of a gentleman who inclosed a part of Mindip Hills near Bristol. He made an excellent fence, ploughed it thrice over, and carried an immense quantity of manure; and for the first crop (which I believe was oats) the tithe man's demand was ten shillings per acre the whole value of the land per acre by the year, the gentleman discontinued any farther improvements in enclosing his waste land, from the rapacity of this man's exorbitant demand. Such vultures, such blood suckers are the generality of tithe owners. Whenever the abolition of tithes takes place (and which I hope I shall live to see) what a happy, prosperous, thriving country will Old England be. Our granaries will always be filled with corn, and in case of bad crops, or bad harvest which often occur, we shall always have a store for every emergency, without the aid of any foreign power to supply us. And however lukewarm many people may be about a revolution or change of government, arising solely from the oppression of tithes, if this odious tax could be removed, and an equivalent substituted, we may then bid defiance to Buonaparté and his subjugated vassals. Our churches will again be filled with thousands of absentees, religion will revive and prosper, and unanimity, cordiality,

and brotherly love will be established between all ranks.—I am, Sir, &c.—J. F. D. Taunton, Jan. 8, 1808.

TITHES.

SIR;—Much has been written in your Register lately on the subject of tithes: but amongst the different opinions which have been there advanced, nothing according to my apprehension has evinced either knowledge or ability.—The learned and the unlearned,—the landlord and the tenant; even the merchant, the tradesman and the mechanic, have raised their voices against tithes, as being oppressive: but it is to be doubted if a few of these rightly understand what they consider as obnoxious.—To shake the structure on which tithes are founded, needs more than common ingenuity; but to prove that the reasonings and assertions of those who try to raise a clamour against them, are fallacious and absurd, requires not splendid attainments, but simply a few facts that are growing a little antiquated and almost forgotten, through the supineness of the clergy.—There is a monition (quoted by Lyndwood) from Winchelsey, Archbishop of Canterbury about the year 1300, to the clergy of his province, desiring them “to admonish and induce their parishioners to “pay fully and without diminution the “tithes of milk, &c. &c. &c.” “but if “they should fail to obey, let them (the “clergy), compel them, &c. &c.” This document sufficiently proves that the law of tithing existed, was recognized and acted upon in those days. Now, Sir, as Winchelsey was Archbishop some few years prior to the year 1300, I shall assume it, as being undeniably 500 years ago, and proceed to ask, whether the Howards, the Russells, the Greys, the Grenvilles of the present day have a more ancient, or can make out a more honorable and legal claim to their possessions than the parson to his tithes? I deny that they can. Then Mr. Cobbett what are those innovators and meddlers about, who wish to overturn this ancient law? Allow me to ask, that, when you are about to purchase a piece of ground, if you do not first of all consider that it is subject to a land tax and tithes? And if you do not pay accordingly? All records convince us that our ancestors did so. Do you think that any one of your correspondents knows an instance, where a purchaser has been taken by surprise and has been really ignorant of the tithe laws.—You and I may as well say to the butcher of whom we buy a surloin of beef, that it is oppressive to make us pay 9d. a pound for the bone in it, as that a man should in these

days declare tithes to be so ; we ought to know that there are bones in the beef ; and every purchaser of an estate does know that the estate is subject to tithes, if he has not paid an equivalent for its being tithe free.—I shall leave it to those who have leisure and inclination to settle whether tithes are due “ jure divino” or “ jure humano,” or whether it was a pope or a king who was the first author of appropriations ; it is enough for me to have proved their antiquity to be as great or greater than any other tenure ; as in so doing, I humbly presume that my argument in defence of them is unanswerable.—I am not so blind and prejudiced as not to discover some hardships in the strict gathering of tithes ; but every succedaneum which I have seen proposed, has been inefficient and inadequate ; and I am constrained to express my fears that no plan can be adopted, which will be better for the community, and at the same time secure the independence of the clergy, than the old fashioned one, which system-mongers are anxious to annihilate.—I am, &c. &c.
—D. X.

OFFICIAL PAPERS.

BRAZIL TRADE.—*Circular Letter from the Portuguese Ambassador to the Governor of the Island of St. Catherine, and Conditions of exporting goods to St. Catherine, until the pleasure of the Prince Regent be known.*—London, bearing date the 6th of January, 1808.

(Concluded from p. 224.)

3dly. Besides, every master and shipper will bind themselves to pay at the custom house of the said port, the same duties that were paid in Portugal upon every such article, or in lieu thereof, such as may have been already established by his Royal Highness the Prince Regent.—4thly. According to your offer, and to ascertain that no contraband goods are exported thither, the manifest of the said cargo sworn, and authenticated as usual at this custom house, will be signed by the agent and consul general, Mr. John Charles Lucena, and by me.—5thly. On these conditions, which contain all that fair trade can wish for at present, I will most willingly provide every captain with a letter of mine to the governor of said port, informing him of what I have done, and requesting him earnestly to require immediate instructions from the Rio de Janeiro, in case his Royal Highness is already arrived ; and should his Royal Highness be not yet arrived, requesting him besides not to enforce the existing laws, but to suspend them until he receives the in-

structions required, which cannot be long in coming, and in the mean while not to molest, but permit the said ships to wait peaceably for the new orders ; unless he should be authorised by his former instructions to admit the entry of such goods, on paying the same duties as in Portugal, and to allow the captains to invest their proceeds in the produce of the country, in which case I will ardently request the Governor to facilitate this trade.—P. S. I need not say, that upon your application with the licence of the privy council, &c. &c. &c. the manifest will be signed by me, and my letter to the governor will be delivered immediately, without the least expence to any of the concerned.—N. B. I request their excellencies the viceroy and governor of the different ports of Brazil, which this ship may enter in distress, that they will cause it to be accompanied by a guarda costa to the port of the island of St. Catherine, in order to avoid any unjust suspicion against the captain, of illicit commerce.

ENGLAND.—*Blockade of certain ports in Spain, notified to the American Minister, in London, by Mr. Canning, 8th Jan., 1808.*

The undersigned, his majesty's principal secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, has received his majesty's commands to acquaint Mr. Pinkney, that his majesty has judged it expedient to establish the most rigorous blockade at the entrance of the ports of Carthagen, Cadiz and St. Lucar ; and of all the intermediate ports, situated and lying between the said ports of Carthagen and St. Lucar ; Mr. Pinkney is therefore requested to apprise the American Consuls and merchants, residing in England, that the entrance of all the ports abovementioned are, and must be considered as being in a state of blockade ; and that, from this time, all the measures authorized by the law of nations, and the respective treaties between his majesty and the different neutral powers, will be adopted and executed, with respect to the vessels attempting to violate the said blockade, after this notice.—The undersigned requests Mr. Pinkney to accept the assurances of his high consideration.

AMERICAN STATES.—*Mr. Jefferson's Letter to the Assembly of Pennsylvania, declining the offer of serving again, as President. Dated, Dec. 10, 1807.*

GENTLEMEN,—I received in due season, the Address of the General Assembly of Pennsylvania, under cover from the

Speaker of their assembly, by which they express their desire to be proposed for the expiration of the term of office of the high respectability of the immediate less, they for its object of the public ing as the That I should per period borne it to the service affixed by practice, in fact, how easily stance.—B government, elections, est sum of duty to do pair that ly be the sound pre cessor, sh prolongin —Truth sensible c bring on ought not py, if I a this adm licit a re wearied tion whic ylvania principle nagemen thankful carry int and good ly, it wil and will the only

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Speaker of the two Houses, in which, with their approbation of the general course of my administration, they were so good as to express their desire that I should consent to be proposed again to the public voice, on the expiration of my present term of office. Entertaining, as I do, for the General Assembly of Pennsylvania, those sentiments of high respect which would have prompted an immediate answer; I was certain, nevertheless, they would approve a delay which had for its object to avoid a premature agitation of the public mind, on a subject so interesting as the election of the chief magistrate.—That I should lay down my charge, at a proper period, is as much a duty as to have borne it faithfully. If some termination to the service of the chief magistrate be not affixed by the constitution, or supplied by practice, his office, nominally for years, will, in fact, become for life, and history shews how easily that degenerates into an inheritance.—Believing that a representative government, responsible at short periods of elections, is that which produces the greatest sum of happiness to mankind, I feel it a duty to do no act which shall essentially impair that principle; and I should unwillingly be the person, who, disregarding the sound precedent set by an illustrious predecessor, should furnish the first example of prolonging beyond the second term of office.—Truth also requires me to add, that I am sensible of that decline which declining years bring on—and feeling their physical, I ought not to doubt their mental effect; happy, if I am the first to perceive and to obey this admonition of human nature, and to solicit a retreat from cares too great for the wearied faculties of age.—For the approbation which the General Assembly of Pennsylvania has been pleased to express of the principles and measures pursued in the management of their affairs, I am sincerely thankful; and should I be so fortunate as to carry into retirement the equal approbation and good will of my fellow-citizens generally, it will be the comfort of my future days, and will close a service of forty years, with the only reward it ever wished.

ETRURIA.—*Proclamation of the Queen Louis Maria, upon dissolving the Government.—Dated at Florence, Dec. 10, 1807.*

In pursuance of a convention between their Majesties the Emperor of the French and King of Italy, and the King of Spain, Tuscany has been ceded to his Imperial Majesty; and yesterday evening the Queen (to whom other states are to be assigned) departed hence with a train of between forty

and fifty carriages, containing baggage and private property; after which the Etrurians were discharged from their oath of allegiance, and the government declared to be dissolved by the following proclamation:—Charles Louis, Infant of Spain, King of Etruria, &c. and on the part of his Majesty, her Majesty Maria Louisa, Infanta of Spain, Queen Regent of Etruria.—Whereas his Majesty the Emperor of the French and King of Italy has informed us, that, by virtue of a treaty concluded with his Catholic Majesty, other states are appointed for us in exchange for the kingdom of Etruria, ceded to the most illustrious Emperor by the aforesaid treaty; we consider our reign in Etruria as dissolved from this day, and hence discharge the Etrurian nation from every oath of allegiance towards our Royal Person.—Yet we cannot separate from subjects so dearly beloved, without publicly assuring them of our entire gratitude, and of the memory which we shall at all times retain of the faithful attachment which they have displayed during the time of our government.—Yet if there is a thought which can diminish our affliction at such a separation, it is this, that the kingdom of Etruria—that so obedient a nation becomes subject to the happy government of a monarch who is adorned with the most heroic virtues, among which the constant care is pre eminent with which he labours to assure the prosperity of the people under his authority.

AMERICAN STATES.—*Message of the President to the Congress, relating to an Embargo, Dated, Dec. 18, 1807. Also the Act of Congress laying the Embargo, passed Dec. 22, 1807.*

MESSAGE.—The communications now made, shewing the great and increasing dangers with which our vessels, our seamen, and merchandize are threatened, on the high seas and elsewhere, from the belligerent powers of Europe, and it being of the greatest importance to keep in safety their essential resources, I deem it my duty to recommend the subject to the consideration of Congress, who will doubtless perceive all the advantage that may be expected from an inhibition of the departure of our vessels from the ports of the United States. Their wisdom will also see the necessity of making every preparation for whatever event may grow out of the present crisis.

ACT.—Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, that an embargo be and hereby is laid on all ships and vessels in the ports and places with-

in the limits or jurisdiction of the United States, cleared or not cleared, bound to any foreign port or place; and that no clearance be furnished to any ship or vessel bound to such foreign port or place, except vessels under the immediate direction of the President of the United States; and that the President be authorised to give such instructions to the officers of the revenue, and of the navy and revenue cutters of the United States, as shall appear best adapted for carrying the same into full effect. Provided, that nothing herein contained shall be considered to prevent the departure of any foreign ship or vessel, either in ballast, or with the goods, wares and merchandize on board of such foreign ship or vessel, when notified of this act.—Sect. 2. And be it further enacted, That during the continuance of this Act, no registered or sea-letter vessel, having on board goods, wares and merchandize, shall be allowed to depart from one port of the United States to the other within the same, unless the master, owner, consignee, or factor of such vessel, shall first give bond with one or more sureties to the collector of the district from which she is bound to depart, in a sum of double the value of the vessel and cargo, that the said goods, wares, and merchandize, shall be relanded in some port of the United States, dangers of the seas excepted; which bond, and also a certificate from the collector where the same may be relanded, shall, by the collectors respectively, be transmitted to the secretary of the treasury. All armed vessels possessing public commissions from any foreign powers are not to be considered as liable to the embargo laid by this act.

SPAIN.—*Decree against England, dated Jan. 3, 1808.*

The abominable attack committed by English ships of war in 1804, by the express order of that government, when four frigates of the royal fleet, which, sailing under the full assurance of peace, were unjustly surprised, attacked, and compelled to surrender, determined me to break all connection with the British cabinet, and to consider myself as at war with a nation which had so iniquitously violated the law of nations and of humanity.—So atrocious an aggression was a sufficient motive for breaking all the bonds which unite one nation with another; even had I not considered what I owe to myself, to the honour and glory of my crown, and to my beloved subjects. Two years of war have elapsed, and Great Bri-

tain has not moderated her pride, nor renounced the unjust domination which she exercises over the seas; but, on the contrary, confounding at once friends, enemies, and neutrals, she has manifested the formal intention of treating them all with the same tyranny.—From these considerations I determined, in February last year, in conformity to the wise measures adopted by my intimate ally, the Emperor of the French and King of Italy, to declare, as I have declared, the British isles in a state of blockade, in order to see if that measure would reduce the British cabinet to abdicate its unjust supremacy over the seas, and to conclude a solid and durable peace. Far from that, the English government has not only rejected the propositions which were made on the part of my intimate ally the Emperor of the French and King of Italy, whether directly or by the mediation of different powers friendly to England, but also having committed the most enormous of atrocities and injuries, by its scandalous attack on the city and harbour of Copenhagen, it has thrown off the mask; and no person can any longer doubt that its insatiable ambition aspires to the exclusive commerce and navigation of the seas. Nothing can prove this more evidently than the measures which that government has just adopted by its orders of the 14th of November last; by which it not only declares the coast of France, Spain, and their allies, and all those occupied by the armies of either power, in a state of blockade, but has even subjected the ships of neutral powers, the friends, and even the allies of England, to the visits of English cruizers, and to be forcibly carried into an English port, where they are to be obliged to pay a tax on their cargoes, the quantity of which is to be determined by the English legislature. Authorised by a just right of reprisal to take the measures which shall appear to me proper to prevent the abuse which the British cabinet makes of its power, with respect to neutral flags, and to see if we cannot force it to renounce so unjust a tyranny, I have resolved to adopt, and do hereby require there shall be adopted, in all my states, the same measures which have been taken by my intimate ally, the Emperor of the French and King of Italy, and which are of the following tenor.—[Here follows a literal copy of the decree of the 26th December, issued on this subject by his Majesty the Emperor and King.]